

Art on the assembly line



Artists should be evaluated for their work, not their fame. That was Guo Qingxiang's message in a scathing review of the popular painter Fan Zeng.

But that review cost him heavily when Fan sued him and won. Guo is appealing the verdict, citing the catastrophic chilling effects it could have on the art industry and professional critics.

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Pirates rock out

With a name inspired by a Japanese cartoon, local band the Red Pirates is chasing purity in rock.



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Seeking Michelin stars

China's culinary language may be too foreign for famous inspectors.

Expats to enjoy social benefits in China

By Han Manman

Foreign workers will have access to the same social insurance benefits as Chinese nationals starting next month.

According to a regulation passed by the Ministry of Human Resources and Social Security, foreigners, who were previously only covered by private insurers, will have access to five forms of social insurance: pensions, medical insurance, work injury insurance, unemployment insurance and maternity insurance.

The regulation will take effect on October 15.

Foreigners covered by the regulation include workers with employment permits, foreign

experts certificates or press card, as well as those who have permanent residence certificates in the country.

All qualifying foreign workers and their employers will be required to pay the same social premiums as Chinese workers.

The regulation requires employers to apply for social insurance for their expat workers within 30 days of applying for their work permits. Only workers from countries that have signed social insurance agreements with China are exempt.

The regulation is expected to benefit the more than half a million foreigners who are working legally on the Chinese mainland.

Lin Xinqi, director of Human Resources at Renmin University, said the new regulation follows international practices for granting welfare access to foreigners.

"This regulation will improve social security for foreign workers, though it will make them more expensive to hire," Li said.

"The new regulation makes me feel like less of an outsider. I really appreciate it," said Jeffrey Brown, a US citizen who works for a local consultancy. "It may benefit those without insurance coverage who are willing to seek treatment within China's healthcare system."

But Brown said the retirement insurance may not help many expats, since few choose to remain

in the country until retirement.

The regulation permits those who depart China before retirement age – 60 for men and 55 for women – to reclaim their pension contributions. The sum paid by their employers will remain in the social security pool.

"Although the regulations specify that it will be possible for foreigners to claim their pension contributions in a lump sum when they leave the country, it will not be easy for many of them to take advantage of the unemployment benefits," said Adam Livermore, an expert at the Dezan Shira & Associates consultancy that advises foreign businesses planning to enter China.

Foreign students' entry visas increase as the new school year begins



The Beijing government hopes the arrival of more foreigners will speed up the city's transformation.

By Wei Xi

Statistics from the Beijing Exit and Entry Bureau show that as many as 15,700 foreigners have entered the country since August 26.

The bureau receives 1,250 visa applications each day, 48 percent of which are for student visas. The number of people entering on a student visa has risen 5 percent in the last year.

Chen Yan, head of the visa services group, said students from South Korea remain the largest group, making up some 3,536 of this year's in-bound students.

Choi Kwang-hoon is a Korean student who has studied business English at the University

of International Business and Economics. He said he enrolled after graduating from high school in Korea because he said Chinese language is becoming a very important skill.

Sviatoslav Fedorov, a Russian, came to study Chinese at Beijing Language and Culture University with his girlfriend. He said he and his girlfriend decided to stay another six years in Beijing. They plan to change majors after their second year of studying the language.

Fedorov said China will be a significant business partner of Russia in a few years, and that he and his girlfriend plan to pursue

a career that will make use of their Beijing experience.

Encouraging more foreigners to come to Beijing is part of the government's goal to make Beijing an international city. To that end, the Beijing Exit and Entry Bureau is speeding up visa application approval.

"In recent years, we have been allowing foreign students to upload their basic information to the schools," Chen said.

To cope with the semester

boom, the bureau has increased its staff, bringing in temporary workers from related departments and increasing the work day by an hour, Chen said.

"Mondays and Fridays are busier than other weekdays, and there are more people in the afternoon than in the morning," she said. "Students can search for related information on beijing.gov.cn and download application forms there to save time when they come in."

Nobel laureates meet for Beijing forum

By Chu Meng

The Nobel Laureates Beijing Forum 2011 opens at the Great Hall of the People on September 28, the municipal Foreign Affairs Office said Monday.

The three-day event includes speeches, round table talks, international discussions and lectures. Five Nobel laureates and six special guests are expected to speak about weaknesses in China's financing and banking systems.

The biennial academic event was first held in 2005 to promote the exchange of cultures and ideas. Each session is sponsored by the Developmental Research Center of the State Council.

The event presents an opportunity for Chinese scholars and policymakers to have face-to-face discussion with foreign financial experts.

One of participants, Nobel economics laureate Joseph Stiglitz, will lead a roundtable forum to discuss China's 12th Five-Year Plan, which he told Xinhua in May was "a framework that will move China in the right direction."

"China's economic development should focus on people's well-being and livelihood, especially in health and education. GDP growth must help ordinary citizens," he said.

Robert Mundell, the Canadian economist, is participating in the forum for the third time. He will speak on US debt, yuan inflation and international pressure for its appreciation.

He said sustainability is especially important for the country's healthy financial development.

"America's growth was strong, but not sustainable. It was all based on debt. Such unsustainable growth can cause a crisis in many areas," he said.

Other participants will address a wide range of topics, such as the ongoing transformation of China's growth pattern, financial reconstruction and economic revitalization.

The municipal government said that in addition to the professors and scholars, some high school and university students and research institute staff will be given the chance to speak with the laureates at this year's forum.

Nobel laureates will also visit the Chinese Academy of Sciences, Zhongguancun High-tech Scientific Park and Shougang International Animation Industrial Park to learn about China's most recent scientific and design achievements.

Five Nobel laureates and special guests are being given the title of Honorary Professor at five top universities, including Tsinghua University and Peking University.



Nearly a half of the visa applicants are students. Photos by Tao Ran

Famous English teacher admits to beating wife

By Chu Meng

The renowned English teacher and family education specialist Li Yang made a public apology for beating his wife in a 40-minute video broadcast on Sina.com Wednesday afternoon.

The apology came two weeks after his wife, a US citizen, appealed for help on her microblog.

As the marriage involves a foreign national, the Beijing Public Security Bureau began pursuing an investigation and ordering Li and his wife Kim Lee to meet with a mediator last Friday.

In the video, Li promised to stop the violence and to apologize in person to his wife and three children.

One day before the video was released, his wife said she was reading a draft law about domestic violence. She said she hoped he would "admit what he did, accept responsibility and ask for forgiveness."

Li may face further charges after the police investigation.

The couple signed a mediation agreement under police supervision. The police may share details of their investigation with the US Embassy.

Che Dongzhen, an expert in domestic affairs at the Beijing Psychological Consulting Center, said that although they signed a mediation agreement under police supervision, it is not a legally binding document. China has no laws to protect spouses from domestic violence.

The couple met twice with a marriage counselor during the last week. The counselor encouraged them to discuss their problems openly and be more tolerant.

But Lee said it would be diffi-



Kim Lee appealed for help on her microblog two weeks ago and showed photos of her bruises.



Li Yang may face further charges after the police investigation.

cult to resolve the dispute without a legal framework to criminalize abuse.

Li admitted to beating his wife and apologized last Saturday, a week after his wife posted pictures of her severely bruised face and knees on the Internet.

In the video, he said he had held a family meeting on Saturday to deal with how the violence had affected his children. The children, who range in age from 2 to 14, were

present during the beatings.

"I promised to love them even if we divorce. And I also encouraged them to speak out like their mother if they encounter domestic violence in their future marriages," Li said.

He said his abusive actions could be a useful example to teach children and other couples how not to respond when facing the same problems.

Li said the conflict between himself and his wife was due to

Photos from Kim Lee's microblog inherent character and cultural differences, which he does not believe will be solved through counseling.

On the same weekend, the National Women's Federation said the NPC Standing Committee is preparing to pass a law that would protect persons who are victims of domestic violence. The draft law is reportedly in the final stages of deliberation.

Wang Xingjuan, founder of the Maple Women's Psychological Counseling Center, said as many as half of the perpetrators of domestic abuse are people with higher education, employment and social status.

"This may be because such people face more stress. There are no communities or NGOs offering assistance to sufferers of domestic violence in China. Currently, their only means of support are police and lawyers," she said.

Li Yang, founder of the popular Crazy English schools, became famous in the 1990s for his education method that encouraged students to shout and speak rapidly.

Gov hopes love letters can save marriages

By Han Manman

To combat the city's skyrocketing divorce rate, the Beijing government is offering a time capsule service to let newlyweds send each other love letters seven years into their marriage.

The Beijing Municipal Postal Administration, in collaboration with the local civil affairs bureau, began selling cards for the service and special envelopes at the Haidian District branch of the China Post on September 9.

The letters cost 30 yuan to send, and each contains a basic message like a greeting card. Senders can write their own message on the card before sending it. The "Love Post Office" will keep each letter for seven years before delivering it. All letters sent through the new service will use the ZIP code of 100099.

The city's 17 marriage registration offices will also provide the envelopes to couples when they register.

"We came up with the service not only to expand our business,

but also to offer the public another way to express their love," said Liu Jingmin, manager of the post office, which is located by the west gate of the Old Summer Palace.

"We hope the delayed letters will save some marriages in the future," Liu said.

"To send letters to ourselves in the future is a creative idea. I'll do it when I get married," said Ma Lin, who is planning to get married next month.

She said she heard many of her married friends say their relationships ran into trouble after seven years, and she worries that one day she may face the same.

"The sweet moment of taking an oath is worth recording. I'd like to write down my feeling about such an important moment while we're together," Ma said. "I hope the warm words may cool problems in the future and help us remember our best times."

Government statistics show that one in five Beijing marriages end in divorce.



Newlyweds can send love letters to be delivered in the future.

Photo provided by Shi Lei

Nation prepares to commemorate Xinhai Revolution

A nationwide campaign that includes a movie, exhibitions of rare historic photos, concerts and renovations of historic sites will mark the 100th anniversary of the 1911 revolution that ended China's imperial government.

Xinhai Revolution, the movie, will premiere on September 23. Its all-star cast has been compared to *Beginning of the Great Revival*, released earlier this year, and *The Founding of a Republic*, released in 2009.

In 1911, protests and armed uprisings against the Qing Dynasty imperial government broke out across the nation. These events led to the overthrow of the country's young emperor and the establishment of the Republic of China on January 1, 1912.

The movie features Hong Kong star Jackie Chan as Huang Xing, a key figure in the revolutionary events of 1911.

Winston Chao from Taiwan plays Sun Yat-sen, the father of the revolution. The actor, who made his debut in Ang Lee's *The Wedding Banquet*, has played Sun in five movies.

The film may be screened in North America.

Ren Zhonglun, the director, told Xinhua that he hopes to attract a younger audience with big-name actors and modernized storytelling.

"Movies can be a more vivid way than textbooks for people to learn about history and understand their ancestors," Ren said.

Other events will also mark the anniversary of the 1911 revolution.

On October 10, an evening gala will be held in Wuhan, Hubei Province, the site of the first armed uprising in the revolution.

A new museum about the Xinhai Revolution will open in Wuhan on October 6.

Sun Yat-sen's hometown of Zhongshan, Guangdong Province will host 100 commemorative events this year in September and October.

In Zhejiang Province, an exhibition of more than 400 rare historic photos from the revolution began on September 7.

Zhejiang Province is the home of many key revolutionary figures, including Cai Yuanpei, Zhang Taiyan and Qiu Jin.

A tour of Sun Yat-sen's Macao Revolutionary Trail will be held in Macao this Saturday. Participants will see historic sites related to Sun and his activities in the revolution.

(Xinhua)

New language learning wave begins

2011 Beijing Foreign Language Festival seeks fans

By Huang Daoheng

Improving the general public's foreign language ability is essential to the city's 12th Five-Year Plan. However, finding a way to make that goal both achievable and fun could prove a challenge.

The annual Beijing Foreign Language Festival begins October 15, and the city's Foreign Affairs Office is hoping it can help.

Beijing Today spoke with Zhao Huimin, director of the office and the executive deputy director of the Organizing Committee of the Beijing Citizens Speak Foreign Languages Program, about how the city is attempting to create a more international environment.

Beijing Today (BT): Tell us a bit about the history of the Beijing Foreign Languages Festival.

Zhao Huimin (Zhao): The municipal government has been holding the Beijing Foreign Language Festival since 2002. It, along with some foreign language activities, is intended to help residents improve their foreign language ability and create a more international environment.

This year's festival will be held at the Beijing Working People's Culture Palace on October 15 and 16. We are planning other activities for each district's sub-venues.

We try to make the event more attractive each year. This year, we'll focus on public performance and encouraging more people to speak English.

BT: Has the program really helped more people improve their command of English and other foreign languages?

Zhao: Of course! The foreign language festival is the main program we rely on for this. We try to make it practical and interesting by giving people a chance to play games and interact with foreign residents. The results have been very good. Many young students and people working in the service industry have made great improvements in their English. Some have gone on to become regular volunteers in the Beijing Citizens Speak Foreign Languages Program. After learning for themselves, they are eager to start helping others.

BT: How do you evaluate the city's foreign language ability? What can be done to make Beijing more accessible to non-Chinese speakers?

Zhao: The world is shrinking. Over the past decade, many foreign elements have penetrated into all aspects of Chinese people's lives. People who know foreign

languages have more access to foreign cultures and more opportunities to communicate with the outside world. I think most people can see the positive effects of having an international environment.

Within the government, we are trying to make all road signs, public notices, menus and descriptions at scenic spots bilingual. We are also trying to promote the foreign language ability of the city's service industry.

Taxi drivers, waiters and other professionals in the service industry are required to know 100 sentences for daily use in at least one foreign language.

Overall, the growing internationalization of the capital's language and human environment has promoted the exchange and integration of different cultures in Beijing. I think that improving the city's foreign language environment will make life more convenient for foreigners and benefit many local residents.



Zhao Huimin
Photo by Tian Yufeng



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Stuck in megalopolis

Controversy over Beijing having higher living costs than New York City

A recent article by the *People's Daily* is trying to refute a recent claim made by Mercer, a consulting and outsourcing firm, that Beijing has a higher cost of living than New York City.

By comparison, the report said foreign goods in Beijing generally cost more. For instance, a pair of Levi's jeans cost 699 to 899 yuan in Beijing, while the same pair only costs a New Yorker around 256 to 576 yuan (\$40 to \$90). Other luxury goods are horrendously expensive in China.

Even some Chinese-made products cost more in Beijing than in New York.

However, the report said public transportation, services and products with intellectual property rights are more expensive in New York City. Patrick, an American in New York, told the *People's Daily* that the cost of public transportation in New York is 10 times that of Beijing. Other services, including medical and express delivery, all cost more in New York.

While getting a haircut in Beijing costs a couple of dollars, it would cost \$20 to \$40 in New York, he said.

Is living in Beijing really more costly than in New York? *People's Daily* suggested people view these price differences according to context.

(Agencies)



Foreigners strolling through Nanluogu Xiang. Some people believe Beijing has comparatively higher living costs than even New York City.

Fang Fang/IC Photo

The third eye

Middle class still feels pinch of living in megalopolis

By Huang Daohen

To economics professors, the price comparison between Beijing and New York is rather meaningless, and sometimes misleading.

"Because China and the US have different economic structures and taxation systems, surely there will be different labor costs and income levels," said Yuan Qiang, associate economics professor at Beijing Normal University.

Yuan said an academic comparison of relative economies yields more nuanced results than comparing prices directly. Taxation, logistics costs and promotions should all be taken into consideration, he said.

Most New York prices are listed before tax, while in China, prices include taxes, he said.

Yuan said there are other factors, like environment, infrastructure, security and weather.

But for those who count as the "middle class," living in either Beijing or New York City has its disadvantages: a better-paying job doesn't necessarily translate into a better life.

Miles Hu works as an interpreter at a local state-run enterprise in Beijing and

earns around 9,000 yuan per month. At the age of 26, Hu is regarded as belonging in the middle class.

But he doesn't look at it that way.

Hu is single and currently rents a small apartment near North Fourth Ring Road in Chaoyang District. "Although my friends think that I have a good job and don't need to worry much, I still feel insecure," he said.

He isn't alone. A recent online survey by ifeng.com showed that more young people are feeling the increasing pressure of living in big cities like Beijing, where prices of homes and food have soared.

Roy Chen, an IT engineer in New York, agreed.

New York City is generally expensive. Though many argue that one can live very cheaply in Queens or Brooklyn, Chen said rent in the Big Apple for the average person is much higher than that of the average person in Beijing.

But Beijing is not more expensive than New York unless you insist on living lavishly and purchasing imported comforts.

"Anyway, it's hardly surprising people in big cities would feel stuck," he said.

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Behind the rich list

Suspicion surrounds the nation's tycoons

Forbes

By Huang Daohen

Deng Xiaoping once said, "To get rich is glorious." Today, the nation commands the world's second most powerful economy and appears to be awash in billionaires. Yet most of its nouveau riche choose to remain hidden.

While a select few have contributed greatly to the country's economic growth and deserve their earnings, many of the nation's immense fortunes are decidedly ill-gotten.



Forbes released its 2011 China Rich List last week. From left to right: He Xiangjian, Wu Yajun, Zong Qinghou, Liu Yongxing, Liang Wengen, Robin Li, Liu Yonghao, Xu Jiayin, Zhang Jindong and Qiu Guanghe
CFP Photo

Forbes vs Hurun

While much of the world tumbles into financial disaster, China's robust economic growth continues to pump out billionaires, said the financial magazines *Forbes* and *Hurun*.

Last week, the two rating agencies released their 2011 China Rich Lists.

While both agreed the number of billionaires in China is growing rapidly, that was the only thing they agreed on.

Hurun reported in 2009 that the number of US dollar billionaires in China grew 45 percent from 130 to 189. Last year, it reported a growth of 43 percent to 271.

Forbes chose a conservative estimate of 147.

While the *Hurun* List puts Robin Li, founder of search engine Baidu, in third place with net assets worth 56 billion yuan (\$8.77 billion), Forbes ranked Li second with 59 billion yuan.

Though Liang Wengen, head of the equipment manufacturer Sany, topped both the *Hurun* and Forbes lists, they could not agree upon how many billions of yuan he actually had: *Hurun* said 70 billion yuan, while Forbes reported 59 billion yuan.

Which is to be believed?

Xiao Wan, senior editor of *The Beijing News* business section, said both. The gap may be due to different methods of calculation.

In analyzing the assets of Du Shuanghua, president of Rizhao Iron and Steel, *Hurun* treated his property as being located

in Shandong Province, while Forbes classified it as belonging to Hebei Province.

Hurun therefore estimated Du's wealth to be 27 billion yuan, while Forbes estimated it to be 42.8 billion yuan.

Xiao said similar calculation differences may have affected Liang Wengen.

Mysterious figures

But calculation methods are hardly the only problem for a publication that hopes to index the country's billionaires.

Finding and obtaining accurate data is far more difficult, said Jenny Chou, a former *Hurun* employee.

Chou, now an analyst and business consultant, said *Hurun* has several ways to collect data about a billionaire's wealth.

Hurun turns first to its own database, which includes business information collected over the last decade. Chou said it also

interviews the billionaires to confirm media references about their stock portfolios.

Hurun's rival Forbes spends several million dollars each year to maintain its rich lists.

But Chou said the credibility of its data remains doubtful.

"There are billionaires who tend to shy away from such lists because they don't want the publicity," she said.

Indeed, publicity isn't good news for billionaires.

In 2005, Yan Jiehe, head of China Pacific Construction Group, reportedly refused to be listed after ranking as the country's second richest man in the previous year. Later that year, Yan was accused by several banks of failing to pay his debts.

Forbes and *Hurun* aside, there is no end to media groups creating Chinese wealth reports. "But each list and report is based on a different system of evaluation. It's hard to believe any of them are that accurate," Chou said.

For many people, the thrill of

the rich list is seeing which of the big names end up behind bars.

In January, *Hurun* released a special report dubbed the "List of Pigs for Slaughter," naming some 30 rich list tycoons who have been jailed for white-collar crime.

The most notable was former richest man Huang Guangyu, who was sentenced to 14 years imprisonment in 2010 for insider trading and bribery.

Secret billionaires

This year's *Hurun* rich list includes 1,000 Chinese entrepreneurs with an average net worth of 5.9 billion yuan. The number of people with assets exceeding 10 billion yuan hit 127.

But the list may not be presenting the whole story: the actual count could be more than double *Hurun*'s estimates.

Rupert Hoogewerf, founder of the *Hurun* Rich List, said there may be another 300 billionaires in the underground finan-

cial market.

Chou agreed. "The richest group may not always be in the private sector."

Forbes noted that among the 100 billionaires it listed, 30 were deputies of the National People's Congress, the country's top political advisory body.

"The relationship between money and power is nothing new across the globe," Chou said.

But that doesn't mean all of the billionaires are corrupt.

Academician Yuan Longping, who hybridized rice, is the example. He is currently a board member of Yuan Longping High-Tech Agriculture, which is listed on the Shanghai Stock Exchange.

Chou said what people abhor is wealth gained through bribery or backdoor relationships. Many of the nation's super-rich may have made their billions through such improper means.

The government first began to encourage private business in the early 1980s. At that time, such businesses were not allowed to hold bank accounts.

Difficulties in fundraising led many businessmen to engage in bribery, the "original sin" of most billionaires, Chou said.

Chou said poor ethics and the country's ham-handed early attempts at economic development are partly to blame for corruption.

"At that time, the government held all the power. Businesspeople had no choice except to rent that privilege, a situation that planted the seeds for future bribery," she said.

Should Beijing levy congestion fees on vehicles headed downtown?



Beijing is planning to levy downtown vehicle fees to ease traffic woes.

CFP Photo

By Zhao Hongyi

In the Beijing municipal government's 12th Five-Year Plan (2011-2015), released earlier this year, officials finally went ahead with a much-discussed vehicle fee for cars entering the downtown, similar to a congestion fee that was implemented in London years ago.

The traffic fee has been bandied about for nearly a decade as the capital faces an increasing number of cars and worsening pollution.

Beijing used to be dominated by bikes, but now it's all about the car: there are close to 5 million registered vehicles, or nearly 60 for every hundred households.

Ten years ago, the city had only 1 million registered vehicles. By 2005, that number had doubled, and it's gone up every year since.

More seriously, the city has nearly 1 million business vehicles owned by government officials. Private car owners have often criticized the government for failing to scale back its car purchases.

In addition, hundreds of thousands of vehicles from other provinces enter Beijing each day.

The city has made strides in building a sufficient public transportation system, but citizens still complain that it isn't enough.

Many argue that, aside from the increase in vehicles, inadequate planning, roadside construction and lack of enforcement of traffic rules are huge problems.

"The government has many options to ease the congestion instead of levying these fees," said Li Chunsheng, a private car owner. "The fee won't solve all the problems."

Comment

Can't bear another tax

We private car owners already have to pay too many fines and taxes, such as the vehicle purchasing and gasoline tax, and toll fees. Oil prices are increasing every day. It's really a heavy burden now to ordinary car owners. It's OK if you offer us a more convenient public transportation system. The problem is, the system doesn't extend far enough, especially newly developed areas.

— Qin Xiaojiang, private car owner

Understandable policy

I fully understand the municipal government's headaches. Beijing has too many vehicles, and car owners like to use their cars to do everything. Everyone is complaining about traffic jams, but no one has the self-restraint to stop driving. People who are considering buying cars should realize that there will be all these costs, so they have to be willing to pay up and stop complaining.

— Rong Jie, businessman, COFCO

Interested in how fees are collected

I'm a recent graduate, so the congestion fee doesn't apply to me since I don't own a car. But the cost of living in Beijing is terribly high, while our salaries have remained low. We have no idea where these added vehicle fees are going. Many media reports have unveiled that the collected fees are going into government coffers. There's just too much corruption! The government should make their procedures more transparent

(before levying more fees).

— Wu Jiayan, recent graduate from Tianjin Academy of Arts
Levy tax on government vehicles and the rich first

Get rid of those government vehicles, which are a waste of money and a burden on us. Second, tax the rich — they don't care how much you charge. Why does the government want to levy fees on ordinary people? We already pay too much.

— Gao Weiming, netizen

Expert's view

Congestion fee, a creative job to do

The core issue here is about solving the problem of congestion. We need to make it clear who causes the congestion: government vehicles, the rich and those don't follow traffic rules are major players. Therefore, the government should find ways to deal with those issues first, rather than levying a universal fee on all drivers.

No matter how high the congestion fee, it won't have any impact on government vehicles and the rich. This is just not right.

If the authorities insist on levying the fee, they can be more creative in how they do it. For instance, they can impose the fee on vehicles entering the central business district (CBD),

Tian'anmen Square, Financial Street or the Ring Roads, or impose various fees on vehicles based on the amount of time they spend downtown, or impose higher parking fees.

In fact, we have many tools for easing traffic congestion, like persuading people to use public transportation. All in all, solving the congestion problem will take

a more comprehensive effort than simply levying a fee.

Until the government improves the public transportation system, it should leave private car owners alone.

— Jiang Kejing, director of the Energy and Transportation Research Institute, National Development and Reform Commission

Background

How do cities do it abroad?

London started levying a congestion fee on vehicles entering downtown in 2003. Since then, the number of vehicles in the downtown area have been reduced 20 to 30 percent, increasing traffic flow by 25 percent.

But the system in London is very flexible. It charges drivers on a per day basis, so drivers can leave and enter the downtown multiple times within 24 hours. There are also different rates for rush hour and non-rush hour traffic. People who live in the

downtown area are charged 10 percent less.

Singapore has a similar system, but that city is stricter. In 1975, it began charging drivers who entered the 6-square-kilometer downtown area. It also has high parking fees.

The New York city council approved a bill related on March 31, 2008 regarding vehicles entering midtown Manhattan from 6 am to 6 pm. Private cars are levied a fee of \$8, trucks are charged \$21 and taxis \$1.

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Thai TV drama craze catches officials' attention

By Han Manman

Chinese viewers are well acquainted with the "Korean drama wave" that swept the country several years ago. But recently, it's Thai TV that's grabbing attention.

The Thai government, viewing this "Thai storm" as a golden opportunity, is considering dif-

ferent initiatives to promote Thai culture in China, according to its embassy in Beijing.

Thai TV dramas first entered China in 2003, but didn't gain much attention because of the South Korean TV craze.

But two years ago, the Thai soap opera *Battle of the Angels* caused a stir.

Since, TV dramas from Thailand have taken China by storm, winning millions of fans – particularly among women.

Zhang Dong, CEO of Artop International Company, which sells and distributes South Asian films and TV series, set up a new company to distribute Thai dramas in China.

Some TV stations such as Anhui Satellite TV have chosen to air Thai dramas in lieu of their South Korean counterparts.

Video websites are also jumping in. The online video platform Qiyi.com plans to introduce five Thai dramas in the next few months.

Zhang Yuxi, senior director of the website, said some Thai dramas cost 10 times more now than in 2003.

Last month, the Royal Thai Consulate-General in Shanghai launched a survey asking, "Why do you love Thailand TV dramas?" on its microblog. Respondents said they enjoyed Thailand's beautiful scenery, their good-looking actors and actresses and the romantic plots.

Ge Chengzhi, dean of Qiyi's research academy, said Thai shows are challenging South Korean ones in popularity.

He said 15- to 30-year-old females are the core demographic for both Thai and Korean shows. Thai show viewers tend to be a little younger. He said viewers of Korean shows tend to pay more attention to daily consumption,

while Thai show viewers are more concerned about leisure and entertainment.

Punwipa Na Bangchang, culture consul of the Royal Thai Consulate-General in Shanghai, said Thai TV dramas' popularity in China has also caught the attention of people back home.

She cited an example from Pantip.com, a well-known Thai website, which now has a special forum about the "Thai TV drama storm in China."

She said the Thailand government views Thai TV dramas as one of the most effective tools for promoting Thai culture and tourism.

In an effort to further promote itself, Bangchang said the consulate general has invited Thai TV and film stars to China to meet their fans. They will also help set up a platform for Chinese companies and Thai drama producers.

She said since the Internet has facilitated Thailand's entrance into China, the Thai Consulate-General also plans to use the web for promotion, such as on their official microblog, to introduce more Thai dramas and film stars to Chinese fans.

Remembering 9/11 at the US embassy in Beijing



As the world marks a decade since the 9/11 attacks on America, somber ceremonies were held across the globe. Hosted by US Ambassador to China Gary Locke, people gathered at the US embassy in Beijing to show solidarity and remember those who lost their lives 10 years ago.

(By Han Manman)

Xinhua Photo

2011年9月15日
温情呈现

BQ美容特刊 —— 《光阴的故事》

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Upcoming IFC concert all about Broadway and fun

By Annie Wei

It may be a bit early, but fans of Broadway tunes and the local International Festival Chorus (IFC) should mark down the date of the IFC's Fall Concert on October 29.

Unlike its previous concert, which was mainly singing, the upcoming show will feature a Broadway set. "There will be a big band, and the choir will be on for the first and second halves," said Josh Dominick, who has been an IFC member for five years.

The concert will be a tribute to Broadway from start to finish, with samplings from many diverse styles. "You may have heard that the performances of *Mamma Mia* and other Broadway productions have been popping up around Beijing this year, but this concert will give the audience a full range of music from the best of Broad-



IFC is one of the most active communities in town.

Photo provided by IFC

way," Dominick said.

This is the IFC's "fun" concert of the year, with a jazz big band cum orchestra combined with catchy show tunes from George Gershwin, Rodgers and Hammerstein, and Andrew Lloyd Webber.

After a performance of *Pirates* at the Western Academy

of Beijing in 2001, Nick Smith, conductor of the IFC, got the idea to form an international group of amateur musicians. A few months later, the IFC held its inaugural concert of Mozart's Requiem at a sold-out Forbidden City Concert Hall.

The IFC comprises singers from more than 20 countries and

a group of at least 100 Beijing-based talents.

An Evening of Broadway Melodies

Where: Peking University Centenary Hall

When: October 29, 7 pm

Tel: 6406 8888

Ticket: From 20 yuan (student ID required) to 320 yuan

ICVS opens workshop to help stray cats

Facing swelling colonies of stray cats in residential compounds, the International Center for Veterinary Services (ICVS) will provide free trap-neuter-return (TNR) training and certification to

cat-care providers, as well as volunteers to promote the program.

As a certified TNR practitioner, you may borrow traps from the ICVS and request assistance from the center's TNR experts. The cen-

ter's volunteers are also on call to help conduct mass trappings.

Where: International Center for Veterinary Services, Kent Center, 29 Liangmaqiao Lu, Anjialou, Chaoyang District

Open: September 24, 11 am - 12:30 pm for Chinese-language workshop; 1-2:30 pm for English workshop

Tel: 8456 1939 (reservation required) (By Wei Ying)

Event

Free yoga class for kids

Incy Wincy Yoga is offering three free trial classes for anyone between the ages of 4 and 12 who is interested in yoga. Classes will be split according to age. Studies show there is a positive correlation between academic and behavioral performance and learning yoga. Please register at incywincy-yoga.com.

Where: Peking House, A20, Xidawang Lu, south of SOHO New Town, Guomao

When: Every Saturday, 9-11:45 am

Tel: 15901122228

Cost: Free

Bartending class

Learn some of bartending's most basic techniques from Anthony and the Fairmont bartending team at the Champagne Bar. Transform into a top-notch drink slinger by learning just a few simple steps. The class will also explore all spirit categories and teach how to properly use the tools of the trade. At the end, all graduates will be given their own set of complimentary bar equipment.

Where: Champagne Bar (Fairmont Beijing), 8 Yongnan Dongli, Jianguomenwai,

When: 6-8 pm, every third Friday of every month

Tel: 8507 3630

Cost: 588 yuan for entire course, 120 yuan per class

(By Wei Xi)

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Expatriate guide for purchasing Beijing property

By Wei Xi

Nathan Siy, a Chinese Canadian who has lived in Beijing for about eight years, is now considering purchasing a secondhand house in Beijing, both because he is about to get married with a Chinese woman and because he believes Beijing property can be an investment.

However, as a foreigner who speaks limited Chinese, he's facing problems, not only from language obstacles but also from changing loan policies.

"Before 2004, there was no such policy, as every foreigner could purchase one house, and the price was much lower," Siy said. "Now it is about the same price as in Canada."

When Siy tried applying for a housing loan, he ran into problems.

"I first tried local banks, but they told me they could only provide a maximum of 50 percent of the entire cost, while foreign-funded banks like HSBC could offer as much as 70 percent," he said.

"But the policies are always changing, and expats don't get notified."

Getting a loan from HSBC is very troublesome, as Siy discovered. "It is less convenient to pay them back and process paperwork. I always have to deal with my HSBC in Canada. Not the branch in Beijing. They cannot do the things I need them to do," he said.

Beijing Today consulted six big local banks – Bank of China, ICBC, Bank of Communications, Agricultural Bank of China, China Mingsheng Bank and Hua Xia Bank – and asked how expats can get a housing loan from them.

Among the six banks, only Mingsheng Bank refuses to offer housing loans to expats. The staff at Hua Xia Bank said it is very



Beijing's real estate price is skyrocketing.

CFP Photo

difficult for expats (excluding those from Hong Kong, Macao or Taiwan) to get approved.

At the moment, Bank of China and ICBC provide the biggest loans: up to 70 percent of the total cost of a house.

Both banks ask for a maximum of 10 years to pay back the loans, and requires the borrower to be younger than 65 years old.

Bank of Communications and Agricultural Bank offer maximum loans of 60 percent of the housing price. The Agricultural Bank requires loans paid back within 15 years and that borrowers not exceed 60 years of

age. Bank of Communications requires borrowers pay back their loans before they turn 65.

When applying for housing loans, foreigners should provide documentation for passport, work visa and employment contact (or anything that can prove the applicant has a stable income). Different banks may also ask for other materials.

All loans are limited to secondhand purchasing, as most bank staffs said property companies selling new homes usually have a cooperative bank that offers loans.

However, not all foreigners

are allowed to purchase a house in Beijing at the moment. According to current government policies, foreigners who have lived in Beijing for more than a year and have a work visa that lasts more than a year have the right to purchase one property in the city.

As for foreigners who wish to sell property, a realtor named Zhao said it is the purchaser rather than the seller who needs to pay the sales tax. But the seller needs to present his or her visa, and a Chinese translation of the visa, that is notarized by the embassy.

Forbidden City to sell tickets online

By Zhao Hongyi

The Forbidden City will begin selling tickets online on September 20, sources from the Palace Museum said.

The online sales will be rolled out in a three-month trial period. The museum estimates it will sell 40,000 tickets online and another 40,000 at the entrance every day.

Yin Jun, public relations officer at the palace, said the new initiative is to control the flow of visitors at the main entrance, especially during National Day holidays in the first week of October.

The museum receives around 50,000 visitors every day, with the number increasing significantly during holidays. The museum wants to limit the number of visitors to 80,000 during the National Day holiday.

Visitors can book tickets at gugong.228.com.cn or dpm.org.cn. The price is the same as at the door: 60 yuan.

Each individual can book five tickets each day, and travel agencies can book more. Purchasers have to register first. The tickets are nonrefundable.

Visitors need to enter the palace at the southern entrance and show their ID cards or purchase number.

Inside the museum are dozens of permanent exhibitions and small-sized relics, such as clocks and calligraphy, that show how emperors used to live.

These exhibitions sell tickets separately. Visitors have to purchase these at the entrance. Prices are between 20 to 40 yuan.

The Forbidden City is consistently one of the top tourism destinations in Beijing. The museum has recovered many of its artifacts through cooperation with Taipei's Forbidden City.

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Printer and calligrapher Fan Zeng sued Guo Qingxiang seeking a public apology and 5 million yuan in damages. CFP Photo

Reporters gathered in front of the Beijing First Intermediate People's Court last Tuesday afternoon to await a statement about Guo's appeal hearing.

Two hours later, Guo and his lawyer Fu Minrong met the press and announced that the appeal would focus on three points: whether Fan had been engaged in assembly-line painting, whether the criticism was an assembly-line painting, whether the criticism was an assembly-line painting.

At the appeal, the prosecution attempted to arrange an out-of-court settlement. Guo refused.

Defamation or criticism

Guo's article, "Artists Should be Evaluated by Their Works," was printed in the Shanghai-based *Wenhui News* on May 26, 2010.

In this article, Guo mentioned "a popular painter and calligrapher who appears frequently on TV and in newspapers selling his philosophy and opinion on art and culture." He did not name the artist, but he criticized him harshly by using phrases such as "limited ability," "a poser" and "boast himself."

Four months after the publication of the article, Fan filed a lawsuit against Guo seeking a public apology and 5 million yuan in damages. He also sued the newspaper, where he sought an apology and 200,000 yuan in damages.

Although Guo did not name Fan, the artist's lawyer said he was certain that Guo was talking about his client. During the first trial, Guo said he was writing about Fan.

Without announcing the verdict of the first trial, the Changping District People's Court mailed a letter

to Guo in June, ordering him to pay 70,000 yuan in compensation and apologize to Fan.

Guo chose to appeal, citing fear of the chilling effects such an outcome could have on art critics nationwide.

"Suffering a negative review is not the same as suffering indignity and humiliation. We should be open to differing opinions about basic facts," Guo's lawyer Fu said in a statement.

"After watching a film, you can praise it as a good film or criticize it as a poor one. The critical words are always derogatory. The important thing is that all of the assessment is based on fact."

Art or merchandise

Criticism of Fan's "assembly-line" painting is central to the case.

Fan's assembly-line skills produce paintings similar to the products of a skilled laborer. That is not what we should be looking for when we buy art. We should be looking for the artist's hands and feet in his paintings," Guo said.

The first time Guo saw Fan working this way was 16 years ago.

After leaving the clothing and furniture industry, Guo started Yuebaohai to invest in paintings and calligraphy in 1992. At his first auction, he bought a painting by Fan for 100,000 yuan.

To increase his knowledge of art, he began to research art history and visit master painters and calligraphers.

In 1995, Mi Jingyang, the former vice manager of

the 300-year-old Rongbaohai art shop at Luichang, asked Guo whether he would like to buy one of Fan's paintings. At that time, Fan needed money to repay the loan on a house he bought in Paris.

"Mi told me that Fan was his friend and he would be a hot artist in the future. For Mi's sake, I decided to buy 200 of Fan's paintings," Guo said.

Sixteen years ago, Fan's paintings sold for 40,000 yuan a piece. Fan sold 200 paintings for a total of 8 million yuan. Guo bought the first batch of paintings for a lump sum of 2 million yuan.

"I was surprised that he could finish 100 paintings in less than a month. I was suspicious that he may have hired someone to paint for him," Guo said.

Guo decided to visit Fan's studio while waiting for the second batch of 100 paintings.

"When I saw Fan's studio, I saw 10 pieces of paper on the wall where Fan painted hands, faces, noses and eyes piece by piece.

"I have visited many masters' studios. It was the first that I saw an artist painting like an assembly-line worker," Guo said. "Were such paintings worth 2 million yuan? I could hardly call them art. They were more suitable for being common gifts or mementos."

Several years later, Fan's student Cui Zimo posted pictures of the assembly-line setup on his blog. At the time, Cui praised his teacher's superb skill.

Today, his photos are being used as evidence at the hearing.

"How many identical shrimps did Qi Baishi paint in his life? How many identical horses did Xu Beihong paint? How many similar donkeys did Huang Zhou

By He Jianwei

The 73-year-old Fan Zeng is a master of traditional Chinese figure painting, a calligrapher and a Knight of the French Legion of Honor.

But his latest identity is as the plaintiff in a "defamation" case. Fan sued veteran collector and critic Guo Qingxiang for a newspaper article that allegedly damaged his reputation last September. The Changping District People's Court ordered Guo in June to write an apology to Fan and pay 70,000 yuan in compensation.

The outcome has many art critics, lawyers and professors debating whether the case will have a chilling effect on other critics.

days? Certainly. But we still believe they are masters and praise their works," Guo wrote.

Cui came last Tuesday afternoon to support his teacher before the appeal. He said Fan had returned to France, and that the case would be handled by his lawyer.

'Nothing personal'

With the plaintiff a famous painter and the defendant a collector, many people suspected the case was driven by personal enmity.

"Guo bought all the paintings he bought from Fan to his kids, citing disappointment with the quality. Today, Fan's work costs more than 1 million yuan per square meter. Some suspect Guo's criticism was a vengeful attempt to drive down the value of Fan's work."

"Why would I disclose the secret of Fan's assembly-line painting to years later? Because I believe the artist should place his own work in the market rather than the most expensive," Guo said.

After the first trial, Fan's lawyer Xue Qilong told the *Beijing Evening News* there was no personal vendetta between Fan and Guo.

The lawyer's interview became Guo's evidence at the appeal.

"Guo wrote the article as an art critic," Fu said. He expects the lower court's ruling to be overturned later this month.

The price of Fan's paintings has not been influenced by the lawsuit. In this week's China Guardian Auctions, Fan's works sold for between 600,000 and 4 million yuan.



The three pictures being used as evidence at the trial show Fan's assembly-line painting.



Photos provided by Guo Qingxiang's lawyer



Art collector and critic Guo Qingxiang's appeal is just beginning. He was sued for writing "Artists Should be Evaluated by Their Works," an article published last May that criticized Fan Zeng's assembly-line painting.

CFP Photo

Artists introduce their creative context

By He Jianwei

Many Chinese artists have found international fame in the last three decades. Their efforts have introduced the world to China's contemporary culture.

But foreign critics continue to misjudge such contemporary art by ignoring the cultural context that drove its creation.

To promote mutual understanding, the Goethe-Institut has compiled *Position III: China*, a book in which 37 artists comment on how the tremendous economic and societal changes of the past decades have affected their creations.

"The book is only the tip of the iceberg and cannot reveal the panorama of Chinese contemporary art.

However, it gives us a chance to understand China through artists' narrations," Hans-Georg Knopp, general secretary of Goethe-Institut and one of the editors, said last Sunday at Kubrick Bookstore.

The book includes interviews with artists working within fine arts, music, film, drama and literature. Most studied or lived abroad for some period.

"At first, they had an open attitude towards European and American cultures. And then they absorbed these outside cultures more selectively. Eventually, they began to rethink Chinese culture," said Gao Hong, one of the interviewers.

Between last May and August, Gao interviewed three artists, including Qu Xiaosong, one of China's pioneer composers of classical music.

After graduating from the Central Conservatory of Music in 1989, Qu went to Columbia University as a visiting scholar. He lived in New York for the next 10 years, during which time he sent his work around the world.

"When he studied classical composition, especially the German system in college, he wanted to go beyond romanticism. He started to look back from Chinese and Indian traditions to develop his own style," Gao said.

"Although his composition skills are quite European, the spirit of his music is rich in Chinese and Indian character."

European critics called Qu the "master of tense silence" because they think his music was mysterious. Chinese tradition values silence above all other sounds, and Qu's work aspires to this philosophy while incorporating traditional instruments such as the guqin and guzheng.

"When he performed in Germany, one critic labeled Qu's music 'folk' because it used traditional instruments. But if the critic had listened to Chinese folk music, he would realize that was obviously not the case," Gao said.

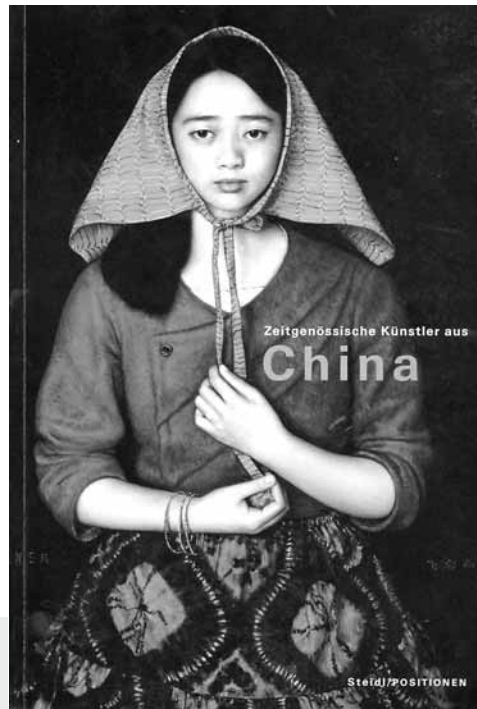
Although there are some books introducing Chinese contemporary artists in Europe and the US, this book is the first to include artists from a variety of fields.

"The most important thing is that this book was not written by any critics, but by the artists themselves. Their interviews help us approach their inner world," she said.

It is the third book in the Position series. The first two are about Turkey and South Africa. The book will be published in Chinese later this year.

Position III: China

Edited by Hans-Georg Knopp and Johannes Odenthal, 383pp, Steidl



Tolerance key to a better society

By Wei Xi

Many modern problems, such as pollution, corruption and moral bankruptcy, have their root in the world's break-neck pace of development.

But if the direction the world is headed is causing such disasters, how can its development be judged as good?

Writers and critics, including Yang Zhao, Liang Wendao and Zhang Tiezhi, met last Sunday for a talk at One Way Street bookstore to talk about these and other social problems.

Yang, a well-known Taiwanese writer and critic, said the foundation of a good society is a willingness to hear dissenting voices rather than forcing obedience.

He likened a good society to a good novel – a book is open to being appreciated in different ways by its readers.

"When we hear that One Way Street bookstore is full of Liang Wendao's fans, we get an image of what the bookstore looks like and who Liang Wendao is," Yang said.

Yang was born in 1963 and experienced Taiwan's shift from a society of conformity to one that welcomed differences – one that he called better, though imperfect.

Although Zhang said he has been influenced by Yang, his background in political economy gives him a clearer understanding of the modern world.

"The centralized government system and planned economy did not work for the Soviets or for the former socialist countries of Eastern Europe. Of course, the capitalist US also has many

inequalities and poor social security," Zhang said.

Although many scholars are studying alternative forms of social organization, no one has found one that works well.

Liang agreed, saying there is no definite answer as to what makes a society good. Though he said most people are able to at least recognize what makes a society bad, calling the former Soviet Union a prime example.

He said the reasons often cited for disintegration are false.

While US President Ronald Reagan did upset the country with his Star War program, the Soviets knew it was impossible to complete

within 10 years. The nation's war in Afghanistan is often credited with bankrupting the Soviet Union, but in truth it only consumed about 2 percent of the country's GDP.

Indeed, in its final years, the Soviet economy was still growing at an average of 2 percent per year.

"When scholars go back to read the newspapers of the time, they find that many people in the USSR were asking the same questions: How can we make the truth known? Is there anything we can trust? They saw their nation's moral fabric unraveling," Liang said.

Liang recommended reading *Fictions Light the Future*, Yang's new book in which he explores how a society can avoid becoming stuck in a downward spiral.



Fictions Light the Future

By Yang Zhao, 402pp, Guangxi Normal University Press, 39 yuan

Bookworm book listing

The Bookworm recommends the following bestsellers to *Beijing Today* readers.

Shieldwall

By Justin Hill, 416pp, Little Brown and Company, \$40.5

The year is 1016 and England burns while the Viking armies blockade the great city of London. King Ethelred lies dying and the England he knows dies with him; the warring kingdoms of Mercia, Wessex and Northumbria tremble on the brink of great change. One man lives to bear witness to the upheaval: Godwin, barely out of boyhood and destined to become one of his country's great warriors.

Jamrach's Menagerie

By Carol Birch, 304pp, Doubleday, \$25.95

It tells the story of a 19th-century street urchin named Jaffy Brown. Following an incident with an escaped tiger, Brown goes to work for Charles Jamrach, the famed importer of exotic animals, alongside Tim, a good but sometimes spitefully competitive boy. Thus begins a long, close friendship fraught with ambiguity and rivalry. Jamrach recruits the two boys to capture a fabled dragon during the course of a three-year whaling expedition.

The Man From Beijing

By Henning Mankell, 464pp, Vintage, \$14

In the far north of Sweden a small, quiet village has been almost entirely wiped out by a mass murderer. The only clue left at the scene is a red ribbon. Among the victims are the grandparents of Judge Birgitta Roslin, who sets out to find the killer. Despite being brushed off by the police, Birgitta is determined to prove that the murders were not a random act of violence but are part of something far more dark and complex.

(By He Jianwei)



Examining art and society



Dream

By He Jianwei

Liang Zhilong is more of a social observer than an artist.

In viewing his paintings, people can sense his strong sense of responsibility for society. From earthquakes to battlefields, Liang reflects an anxiety about the future on his canvas.

His works stir consciousness and inspire people to cherish life.



When Civilization is Fading Away No. 6



Incident No. 3

Photos provided by Huantie Times Art Space

The scenery of his paintings is gloomy – not only because he uses cool tones of pale gray and brown, but because his subject matter is disaster.

In his *Ship* series, Liang paints sinking military vessels; in *When Civilization is Fading Away*, he paints a burning tank; in 2008, Liang depicted the rescue operation after the Wenchuan Earthquake; last year, he painted the end of the world.

His paintings are hard and gritty. To Liang's eyes, beauty vanished long ago in a sea of pollution and regional conflict.

Throughout the past decade, he has explored the relationship between art and society. Rapid development has given rise to material greed – a need that is only satisfied by further marring of the natural environment.

"We enjoy the achievements of modern

civilization by living in the city. However, we can't ignore the problems that resulted because of technology and civilization," he said. "Our material desires keep us surrounded by dangers."

Born in 1975 in Baotou, Inner Mongolia, Liang is a lecturer at the Beijing Institute of Graphic Communication. In his latest paintings, he combines oil and Chinese painting techniques.

Although the theme of his paintings is reality, his style is not realistic. Inheriting the tradition of Chinese painting, Liang's work is rich in metaphor. A sinking ship and flaming tank represent industrial civilization just as a guqin represents harmony.

Liang juxtaposes such different images to make viewers reconsider the future. As an artist, Liang cannot solve social problems, but he can expose them with his brush.

"Everyone who has a conscience worries about the future and searches for a path to solve the problems," he said. "I just reveal our ancestors' view of nature – its harmony with man – on canvas."

As an art teacher with several years of experience, he has been thinking about art in terms of not only aesthetic education, but also the reflection and retrospection on social issues. He hopes art can contribute to the progress of society.

"It will be a long and difficult road, and this is just a beginning. I hope my effort is significant and worthwhile," he said.

Last Saturday, Huantie Times Art Space presented some of Liang's works from the past decade as part of a project to promote future stars.

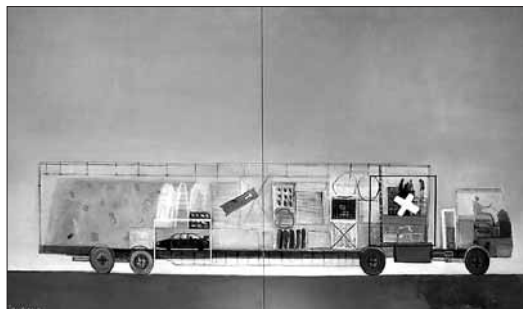
Liang is the third artist selected by the project, which introduces young art-

ists who are interested in exploring social issues through their work.

"We appreciate Liang's sense of responsibility for society and we hope his works continue to show such farsighted development," said Sun Xiaojuan, director of the gallery.

Liang Zhilong Solo Exhibition

Where: Huantie Times Art Space, Huantie Art Zone, near China National Film Museum, 9 Nanyang Lu, Chaoyang District
When: Until October 10, daily except Monday, 10 am – 6 pm
Admission: Free
Tel: 6435 2113



Project of Crossing the Border Illegally



Retired Submarine



Leather bag from Rfactory, price to be decided



Necklace, price to be decided



Handmade jewelery, 5,600 yuan

Only for BNC



iPhone case by Ye Qian, 268 yuan



Belt, 1,980 yuan



Cashmere scarf from Shokay, 1,495 yuan

By Annie Wei

Last Thursday was the first anniversary of Brand New China (BNC), a leading boutique for indie designer items that promotes China's original design.

More than 20 designers carried out a special design, "Only for BNC," as a thank-you gesture for the store and customers who have supported them.

Four or five years ago, the concept of "Chinese original designers" was barely accepted by local consumers.

All shopping malls were jammed with brands that looked alike. Consumers were proud of carrying international brand items, even if they were fake.

Most indie designers at the time could only work independently, open a boutique and maintain their own clients through word-of-mouth.

Within one year of its establishment, BNC has become the go-to place for the chic and fashionable.

Not only does it gather products from more than 100 local designers, it also helps these designers get their name out and become more accessible to the public, especially under the strong influ-

ence of its co-investor, the media publisher Hong Huang.

Simon Wang, a fashion designer, said working with BNC was meaningful. "After all, few department stores all over the country now sell indie designer brands," he said.

While there seems to have been a boom of Chinese designers, the market is still young. Mature "indie" designers who can develop an entire series of products or have clear sense of their career path are few. Most young designers lack experience. They need to be nurtured and given time to grow, and that's how BNC can help.

BNC aims to be more. Two months ago, BNC set up a scholarship in ESMOD Beijing, an international fashion university group, and signed a graduate student as its first contract designer.

This week, *Beijing Today* selected some items specially made for BNC.

BNC
Where: B09A, Village North, 19 Sanlitun Lu, Chaoyang District

Open: 10 am - 9:30 pm

Tel: 6416 9045



Hipanda tank-top, price to be decided

Photos provided by BNC

Wine-and-dine the French way, in style

By Annie Wei

Take advantage of harvest season – which happens to coincide with clear skies and mild temperatures – by going out for a romantic dinner over good wine.



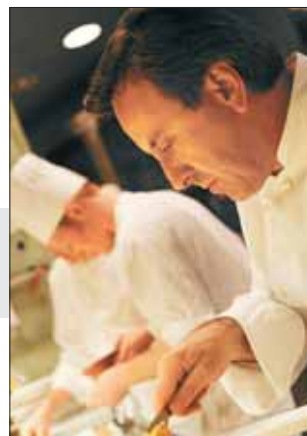
Mediterranean flavor fish



Traditional southern France fish soup



Harissan grilled lamb loin



Daniel Boulud

Photo by Owen Franken at Damen



Beef

Photos by Lin Feng

Daniel Boulud introduces new dishes for early fall

By Annie Wei

Maison Boulud has been the city's top destination for French fine dining since opening in 2008.

It was named after its founder, Daniel Boulud, who owns several well-reputed restaurants in New York. The chef flies in at least once every three months to work with executive chef Brian Reimer to introduce new dishes.

The two prepare local Chinese and Pacific Rim ingredients according to time-honored French techniques. The chef said that no matter where he is, his signature remains a French spirit combined with the best seasonal produce – local whenever possible.

For example, while the seafood is from Southeast Asia, the lamb from New Zealand and the beef from the US, all herbs, vegetables and mushrooms are local.

Last week, Boulud arrived to prepare some new dishes with a touch of Mediterranean flavor, also the

theme of his newly opened restaurant, Boulud Sud, in New York.

The meal started with a few Mediterranean canapés, including rabbit porchetta with date chutney, vitello with tomato, celery and capers.

The traditional fish soup was from southern France, with ingredients of saffron, tomato, fennel, garlic croutons and rouille, and has a strong flavor and beautiful orange color. It reminds one of how these plants, vegetables and fruits ripen under the strong sunshine of southern France.

Sardines escabeche with raisins and pine nuts is a typical Mediterranean cuisine great for a hot summer afternoon. Its strong taste goes well with red wine.

The harissan grilled lamb loin, tender braised lamb shoulder Cleopatra with cumin, cinnamon and Algerian-style eggplant is recommended. Two kinds of lamb meats are stewed in a heavy pot, giving it a nice aroma. You taste two different textures, a tender shoulder

and the more chewy loin.

The beef dish is made from a big serving of Australian beef topped with crushed fava bean bed, with king mushrooms and salsa verde.

Our favorite is the new grapefruit dessert. A frozen pink grapefruit is filled with grapefruit sorbet, rose water gelee and covered by a sesame mousse and halva.

When eating it, dig your spoon to the bottom of the sorbet: the flavor is sweet with a bit of the grapefruit's bitterness. It is also delicious.

The new dishes will be available on Maison Boulud's fall menu.

All dishes are paired with wines from Gerard Bertrand. The meal starts with Rose for starters, Cigalus Blanc for the fish soup, Pinot Noir for fish, Chateau L'Hospitalet for lamb, La Forge Gerard for beef and Grain De Muscat for dessert.

We recommend La Forge Gerard Bertrand 2003 (1,500 yuan, available through EMW Trading Company), which only has 3,000 bottles.

It has a deep ruby purple color, ripe black fruit aroma, toasty oak and minerals. Its taste is rich in layers.

We also like the sweet wine Grain De Muscat, which has a nice yellow color with intense aromas of roses, exotic fruits, citrus and white flowers, tasting slightly sweet and refreshing.

As the former location of the US embassy, Maison Boulud, with its renovated interior, is a beautiful place worth visiting.

Maison Boulud

Where: 23 Qianmen Dong Dajie, Xuanwu District

Open: 11:30 am – 2 pm from Monday to Friday, 11 am – 4 pm on weekends; 6-10 pm from Monday to Sunday

Tel: 6559 9200

EMW Fine Wines - Beijing office

Where: Room 709, Reichen International Center, 13 Nongzhan-guan Nan Lu, Chaoyang District

Open: 9 am – 6 pm

Tel: 6445 5787



Gerard Bertrand wine available through EMW

Wines from Crus Bourgeois

By Annie Wei

It wasn't the first time that wines from Medoc, France were presented in Beijing, but it was the first time for Les Crus Bourgeois du Medoc, a wine alliance of Crus Bourgeois properties.

And it did it in style.

Last month, the alliance hosted a wine tasting event with more than 30 vineyards represented.

With so many wines entering the China market, Medoc hopes to stand out with its consistency.

"We know that in China, wine price and quality are not consistent," said Olivier Cuvelier, vice president of the Alliance of Crus Bourgeois' vice president and

owner of Chateau Le Crock.

Medoc is a small region in France known for producing quality wine at more reasonable prices.

With increasing wine knowledge, Chinese consumers are more familiar with what different French wines taste like, and slowly, locals will know about Crus Bourgeois du Medoc, Cuvelier said.

The Les Crus Bourgeois du Medoc has 250 vineyards, at least 50 of which are represented available here.

Below are some recommended wines available in China:

Chateau Patache d'Aux, 490 yuan, available through Charter Base International Logistics

(021-586 3868).

Chateau Pavil du Luze, 550 yuan, available through Assino World Wines (aussino.net).

Chateau Caronne Ste Gemme, 498 to 598 yuan, available at chateau-caronne-ste-gemme.com.

Chateau Paloumey, 480 yuan available at chateau-paloumey.com.

Chateau Vieux Moulin, 400 yuan, available at cave-listrac-medoc.com.

Chateau Anthonic, 400 yuan, available at chaeuantonc.com.

Chateau Fonbadet, 920 yuan is available at chateaufonbadet.com.

Chateau Le Crock, 550 yuan is available at chateaulcrock.com.



At the wine tasting of Les Crus Bourgeois du Medoc

Photo provided by Crus Bourgeois

Rock 'n' roll pirates seek pure music



By Wei Xi

A fat foreigner, a short man, an honest man and a smiling girl: they are the Red Pirates, a young, self-denigrating band that seeks the purity of rock music.

Baby-faced guitarist Li Xuan, 23, who prefers going by "Banx," first thought of organizing a band in 2008. In 2009, he found others who shared his love for music.

Liu Xin was the vocalist (before being replaced by Dave Cooper, the "fat foreigner," who wasn't in the original group), and Ni Shuo, or Little D, was the other guitarist.

The band members all loved *One Piece*, a Japanese cartoon, which tells the story of a group of pirates who joined together to fight for their goals.

"We all cherished the spirit of these pirates and thought we were pretty much like them," Li said. Young people who pursued rock 'n' roll were considered loafers who only played around, but the Red Pirates wanted to be more. They wanted to strive for a dream worth fighting for.

The "red" part refers to them having "grown up under the red flag," Li said, laughing. "And red also symbolizes enthusiasm and absolute sincerity."

Liu and Ni later left the band, leading Li to invite Cooper, a British man whose strong vocals were impressive.

"On a day when our band members were waiting to use a practice room, we saw Dave standing alone in the corridor playing a guitar and singing," Li said. "I liked his voice very much and immediately exchanged phone numbers with him."

Li also believes rock songs should be sang in English, as the genre originated in English-speaking countries. The meter and rhythm fit English.

"Dave is a man with active thoughts and who does not want to be constrained," Liu said. "So he encourages us to add different musical elements into our music, and to change our positions in the band."

Each member has a unique personality. Liu Luyao, or Yaoyao, the drummer, is the only woman in the band, and the most tireless.

"Playing the drums consumes a lot of physical energy, but she also has to work very hard in order to

make a living and pay her rent in Beijing," Li said. "But she always keeps smiling when she's playing the drums on stage."

"I myself don't know why I smile whenever I play," Liu said. "I just feel like I want to smile."

Zhang Yangbing, the bassist, is a quiet, contemplative man who is a perfectionist, Li said.

Cooper, meanwhile, is the opposite of Zhang. "He likes to express himself and have interaction with the audience," Li said. "He has the power to infect all those present with his energy."

As for himself, Li said he thinks highly of his guitar-playing skills.

Interestingly – but not surprisingly – none of the four studied music in school. Li was a journalism major in college, Liu studied fine arts, Zhang was in the culture industry and Cooper is a computer science professor.

The four bonded through music.

Usually, the three Chinese members compose the music and Dave writes the lyrics.

"Music composition is sometimes like playing a game, sometimes doing serious work and sometimes writing a mood diary," Li said. "Sometimes it'll happen suddenly. For example, Yaoyao will play a few minutes, then all of a sudden I come up with some melody."

Li said the drummer is the skeleton of the band, keeping it together. The bassist is the nervous system, controlling the rhythm. The guitarist is the muscles, connecting flesh and blood, while the vocals are the face.

"Lacking any part, the band will not be healthy," Li said.

Although still young, the Red Pirates try to play twice a week at venues such as D-22, Zuiyuefang, Hot Cat Club and Mako Live House. They are considering recording their first album.

"But we will not play for commercial purposes, nor will we seek fame from music," Li said. "We only want to play pure rock 'n' roll, which can express the aspirations of our generation."

"Music composition is sometimes like playing a game, sometimes doing serious work and sometimes writing a mood diary. Sometimes it'll happen suddenly."



Vocalist Dave Cooper
Photos provided by Li Xuan



Bassist Zhang Yangbing



Drummer Liu Luyao



Li Xuan playing the traditional Chinese instrument zhongruan

“Everyone lives
a life of one's
own choice.”

By Zhang Dongya

Most small towns in China have gangs of idle youth that the locals regard as hoodlums and hooligans. In Jiangxi Province, these groups are nicknamed Luohan, or Arhats.

Director Tao Huaqiao was one of many members. His new documentary, *Luohan*, searches for his own past in the lives of his former gang brothers who never abandoned the lifestyle.



Director Tao Huaqiao

Lowlives in a small town

中国美术学院青年实验电影小组

真实的青春 残酷的青春 忧伤的青春



Tao said he would shoot documentaries only. The experience of being in the gangs will always be part of his works.

Photos provided by
Tao Huaqiao



Scene from the documentary
film *Luohan*



Two years ago, days after Mid-Autumn Festival, Tao Huaqiao returned to his hometown of Duchang County, Jiangxi Province to find his friend Huabing in police custody.

It had only been weeks since he completed his first documentary film *Luohan*, an effort that owed much to Huabing, whose life and 5,000-yuan donation made the movie possible.

The two-hour documentary begins with a monologue in which Tao tells of the days when he and Huabing were members of a street gang in Duchang County. The dialogue is interspersed with long takes that recount simple love stories and happy memories of childhood.

Tao and Huabing were good friends in high school. Tao enjoyed literature and was a good student; Huabing sat behind him and asked for help on every exam.

Though Tao graduated from high school in Duchang, he was not accepted by any college. With no other options, he looked to his idol – Bruce Lee – and left for Hunan Province to study Jeet Kune Do.

While Tao was training, Huabing was attending college in Nanchang, capital of Jiangxi Province. The two kept in touch and visited when they could.

“We talked about art, music and literature when we met.

Huabing was a rocker who wrote the occasional poem,” Tao said.

After three years of studying Jeet Kune Do, Tao returned home to practice painting. Huabing also returned after college, but quickly fell in with a local gang. When his parents attempted to help him find a job, he dragged Tao into the gang and the two took to brawling and smoking pot.

“But Huabing had a sharp mind. He knew I was different from the group from the very beginning,” Tao says. “One time he told me, ‘No matter how much weed you smoke, you’re still only trying to be like us. You’re not like us at all.’”

Huabing mocked Tao’s dreams and tried to persuade him to give up his plans for painting.

Despite his discouragement, Tao was accepted by the China Academy of Art (CAA) in Hangzhou three years later. He left behind Duchang, the old gang and Huabing, who remained jobless.

On that day, their lives began to follow separate paths.

It was during his first year at the China Academy of Art that Tao suddenly became interested in film. He decided to put school on hold for a year to prepare for the Beijing Film Academy’s entrance exam.

“I was actually planning to give up painting if I passed the exam. I was really interested in film at that time,” Tao said.

However, Tao failed the exam and returned to the academy. During his second year, he began recording the footage that would eventually become *Luohan*.

During the semester break, Tao returned to Duchang and began hanging out with the Huabing’s friends – this time as a document-

tary filmmaker.

“I simply recorded their lifestyle: a lazy, dawdled existence,” Tao said. “I never asked why they chose to live that way. Maybe it is because it seemed so natural in a small town.”

In some ways, Tao was searching for his own past in their present.

Scenes in *Luohan* run slow and without dialogue. One Douban user described the movie as having the energy and momentum of a photograph of people playing chess beside a small lake.

“I quite agree with that assessment. My parents were never home during the year, and I lived alone in an old house beside a lake. Duchang is always rainy, so we passed the days playing chess,” he said.

“I love small town life. In many ways, I envy Huabing and those guys. They are so free and unconstrained, and that is something to which all artists aspire,” he says.

When he finished editing *Luohan*, Tao distributed free copies to all the people who appeared in the film. However, some were unhappy about their appearance and felt their privacy had been invaded.

Tao’s next project will be a long documentary called *Jianghu*. The film will continue the theme established in *Luohan* as it follows gang members to learn why some young men choose such a rough life despite its social challenges.

“Many filmmakers like to branch out and experiment with different genres, but I will only shoot [documentaries],” Tao says.

For inspiration, he searches the seats of the nation’s cheapest trains – places Tao says are where passengers will reveal their true selves. The passengers who can afford seats on the fast trains always wear a mask that is “without trace of life,” he says.

Last Thursday, Tao made another visit to Duchang.

“Nothing changed after Huabing was arrested. The small town was just as it always has been,” he said. “The hometown I record in my works will never vanish.”

Since graduating from the China Academy of Art in 2009, Tao has been working as a full-time painting instructor.



Duchang, a small town in Jiangxi Province

Adrift in the sandy sea of Kubuqi Desert

By Zhang Dongya

Autumn is the best time to take a hike – into the desert, that is.

The Kubuqi Desert, one of the country's largest, is also the closest to Beijing. Located in Ordos, Inner Mongolia, its name in Mongolian means "bowstring." If you search the place on a map, it looks like a deep yellow crevice that stretches along the Yellow River.



Qixing Lake

Photo by Ajian

If you didn't already know, hiking in the desert isn't easy. For one, there's the lack of vegetation. And in the case of Kubuqi, there's the altitude: 1,200 meters. And, of course, the blistering heat, made all the worse by the altitude.

Yet those who are tough enough to make it atop the highest dune at Kubuqi will be amply rewarded with a stunning visual: a desert shimmering in the sun, the sand like waves in an ocean.

The vista is broad and boundless. Dunes in the distance will form gentle curves, while others seem to extend to the horizon. When the wind blows, sand might form mini-cyclones. Walking along the ridge, silver grains of sand will trickle from your feet like thin threads of silk.

Liugou River, a tributary of the Yellow River, cuts across the Kubuqi Desert from south to north, forming an

oasis. One place in Liugou River called Longtou (Dragon's Head) Bend is used as a resting place where people can replenish their water supply. The water around Longtou Bend is cool and clear. There are many desert plants that flourish here. One shrub, to visitors' astonishment, consists of thick purple flowers.

Liugou River has a broad riverbed but shallow water, reminiscent of the brooks of southern China. The sand dunes opposite the river are very steep, so that people have to stop several times to rest on their way to the top. The wind gets progressively stronger, creating sandy mists.

The oasis beside Liugou River looks splendid from the top. Small brooks zigzag from the middle of the riverbed, with reeds on both sides. Flocks of

sheep graze on the grass near a pool in the distance.

Visitors can camp at Jiechai Desert Road, near a forest.

On the second day, visitors are advised to head to Xiangshawan Desert Park off to the east. Along the way, they will see a mountain with a green peak, which is where the holy pagoda Yinken Ovoo is located – a good place for people to catch their breaths. There are various animals and insects here, such as small lizards, though much more

common are black beetles.

At noon, visitors will reach Yinken Ovoo, 28 meters high, built like a modern building. There are 81 steps, and the building is surrounded by pillars of white marble.

In Mongolian, Yinken means "permanence." This point is said to be the highest point in Kubuqi Desert. Green plants surround it, making it seem like a verdant island amid a sea of sand.



Windmill

Photo by Ajian



CFP Photos

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Travel China



It takes two hours from here to reach Xiangshanwan, or Sounding-Sand Bay. It is located at the east end of Kubuqi Desert. Xiangshanwan in Mongolian means a sand dune with trumpets. The sand there supposedly makes a sound when you touch it.

Digging the sand with your hands, you will hear a sound like a frog's croaking; when you slide down from the top of the dune, you will hear a roar like a helicopter.

There are many recreational facilities in the park, including desert vehicles, sand skiing and a sand sculpture garden.

Xiangshanwan Desert Park

Open: 8 am - 7 pm

Admission: 120 yuan

Traffic: The park is near the cities of Baotou and Ordos. Besides hiking from the east in Kubuqi Desert, you can also get there from Baotou and Ordos. From Baotou Airport or Baotou Train Station, you can take a taxi, which takes 50 minutes. Or take a bus from the Baotou Long-Distance

Bus Stop to Xiangshanwan Viaduct and go for another three kilometers. For those starting from the Ordos airport or train station, a taxi takes 50 minutes to get there.

Travel information

Getting there: Take a train to Baotou, which takes about 12 hours. Then rent a car to Dalad Banner, the nearest town to Kubuqi Desert.

Admission: Free

Tel: 0477-3968217 (tourism bureau of Dalad Banner)

Hiking itineraries to Kubuqi

Desert:

East Line: Popular and highly recommended. Starting from Engebei Tourism Zone, visitors will pass Liugou River, Jiechai Desert Way and Yinken Ovoo to Xiangshanwan.

West Line: From Yemingsha to Qixing Lake. Be advised that there is no water along the way. But since both Yemingsha

and Qixing Lake are places of interest, this line gets crowded during the holidays.

Required equipment in Kubuqi

Desert:

- High climbing boots
- Quick-dry clothes and jacket
- Round cap and outdoor scarf
- Goggles or sunglasses
- Climbing stick
- Gaiters
- Gas stove
- Sleeping bag

Notes:

1. In September and October, the air

temperature in Kubuqi Desert can reach 25 to 30 C during the day and dip to 10 to 15 C at night. But the ground temperature can get as high as 50 C can reach 50 C in the afternoon.

2. Pack enough water and high-energy food. On average, an adult will consume five to six liters of water in the desert every day.

3. Protect your camera from the sand. Avoid using your camera in the wind. You can use plastic wrap to safeguard your camera.



Kubuqi Desert has a mild climate this time of year.

Photo by Wang Xuan



Tourists in the desert

CFP Photos

Michelin invasion

By Chu Meng

The Chinese culinary world is on a collision course with European evaluation systems.

Each month, many Michelin star-rated chefs come to the capital for one-off dinner presentations at luxury hotels. A few have stayed to open their own restaurants, where locals can enjoy fine French dinners without the need for a flight.

Two years ago, the Michelin guidebook was translated to Chinese and published in Hong Kong. Last month, Michelin opened an official Chinese microblog on Sina Weibo.

It seems the star-rating system is stepping more and more into the Chinese culinary world.



The first Michelin Guide published in France in 1900.

Fu Qiang, a 55-year-old food reviewer at a local fashion magazine, said he had never had as many interviews with chefs from Michelin-starred restaurants as he has during the past six months.

In August, French chef Michel Portos from a two-star restaurant gave a show at the Ritz-Carlton Beijing, and Spanish chef Ferran Adria from three-starred El Bulli presented at the Beijing Hotel. This month, another three chefs will be cooking at the city's luxury hotels for "the National Day" Holiday.

"Their reputation and exotic creations have many Chinese eaters scrambling for a taste," Fu said.

The invasion of the Michelin Guide, a century-old hotel and restaurant star-rating system, into Chinese cuisine has been noticeable. Michelin is trying to create a Chinese starring system for 150-year-old Quanjude's Peking roast duck and 10-year-old Da Dong for its creative kung pao chicken.

"Dinner presentations by Michelin-starred chefs have been a must for five-star hotels in Beijing since the 2008 Olympic Games. The chefs are paid generously for their time. They sweep through with their exotic culinary experiments and leave in a hurry," Fu said.

But five chefs have left their mark on the city.

These Michelin chefs have brought their menus, service and decor from their award-winning restaurant to Beijing.

Their Beijing bases include Tannic Itham's Le Per Lenore at the Sofia Hotel and Claudio Sadler's Restaurant Sadler in Jinmen.

A few have created new restaurants that fuse their culinary techniques with local seasonal ingredients, such as Tannic Allen's three-starred S.T.A.Y. in Shangri-La Hotel Beijing and Marc Veyrat's French restaurant at Summit Club.

"They are diverse and creative in their food – or as they would call it, 'taste art' – but they charge a price 600 yuan per person. However, more and more Chinese eaters are buying. Business is never bad," Fu said.

But strictly speaking, none of

these restaurants are

Michelin-starred, commented food reviewer Shen Hongfei on his micro blog.

"If you check the official website of the Michelin Guide for 'restaurant' and 'hotel,' you won't find anything in Beijing," he said. "In fact, the eight-language website doesn't even provide a Chinese version."

The Michelin Guide, a red brochure with information about Michelin tire maintenance stations, gas stations and driving routes, was created in 1900 in France. It recommended hotels and restaurants along its suggested routes.

The initial 35,000 guides were given to long-distance truck drivers for free. In 1920, Michelin began selling its guides. Six years later, it began ranking its hotels and restaurants with stars.

In 2005, the Michelin Guide began to index restaurants in the Americas. Today, the guide series includes 26 books: 21 of the books are for European countries, four are for the cities of New York, San Francisco, Los Angeles and Las Vegas, one is for Tokyo and one is for Hong Kong and Macao.

The Hong Kong and Macao book, published in 2008, was updated this year and translated to Chinese.

To reach out to the mainland, the Michelin Guide opened a Chinese microblog on Sina Weibo last month.

Miao Xiangbo, director of Michelin Guide China Maps and Traveling, said the company has no plans to distinguish Chinese cuisine from European, though it may be much harder for its rater to understand.

"Ferran Adria complained during his visit to Beijing last month that the matching of food materials and cooking techniques are the language usually understood by international

chefs, but he had no idea what the Chinese chefs were talking about," Xiao said.

Michelin stars are awarded to a select few restaurants based on a strict assessment of the food. These assessments are carried out by a team of professionally trained, anonymous inspectors. The highest number of stars a restaurant can obtain is three, and in 2009 there were only 81 three-star restaurants in the world.

Michelin inspectors have a lot to learn about Chinese culinary culture before they can begin assigning ratings to Beijing and Shanghai's restaurants, Miao said.



Tim Ho Wan Dim Sum Restaurant in Hong Kong is the cheapest Michelin-starred restaurant in the world, which explains why there is a queue up to 3 hours all day long.

Miao's recommended Michelin chefs

Although Beijing doesn't have a Michelin Guide of its own, there are some local restaurants where you can treat yourself to a Michelin star experience.

1. Claudio Sadler's Restaurant Sadler

The chef's Osteria di Porta Cicca in his hometown of Milan was awarded two Michelin stars in 2007. He opened Restaurant Sadler, featuring Italian countryside cuisine, in a Beijing courtyard in 2009. Every dish is cooked with the same materials and in the same style as the restaurant in Milan.

Cuisine and signatures: Italian; mini carrot croissant and mini parmesan cheese puff

Average cost: set menus are 160 yuan per person at lunch and 600 yuan at dinner

Where: Ch'ien Men 23, 23 Jinmen Dong Dajie, Dongcheng District

2. Daniel Boulud's Maison Boulud

Though born in France, Boulud has four award-winning restaurants in America. Daniel, the chef's eponymous flagship restaurant in New York City, was awarded three Michelin stars in 2010. He launched Maison Boulud with Chinese partners in Beijing in 2009. Maison Boulud serves French "soul food" made from locally sourced ingredients.

Cuisine and signatures: French; royale truffle burger

Average cost: 600 yuan per person

Where: Ch'ien Men 23, beside Restaurant Sadler, 23 Jinmen Dong Dajie

3. Marc Veyrat's French Restaurant

Though he never attended cooking school, Veyrat is one of only four chefs to have received three Michelin stars twice for two of his restaurants in France. He is known for his creativity and innovation in using herbs grown in the French Alps. The Marc Veyrat French Restaurant at Beijing Summit Club opened last year. Dinner hour is limited to 50 persons.

Cuisine and signatures: French fusion; Plat Encyclopedie series dishes

Average cost: set menu dinner is 660 yuan per person

Where: 2 Xinyuan Nan Lu, Haidian District

4. Tannic Alleno's S.T.A.Y.

The chef, who was awarded three Michelin stars for Le Meurice in France, is bringing his exceptional French cuisine to Beijing this month at the Shangri-La Hotel. The restaurant is named S.T.A.Y., an acronym for Simple Table Alleno Tannic.

Cuisine and signatures: French; Dublin bay prawn ravioli with Savoy cabbage

Where: Valley Wing, Shangri-La Hotel Beijing IF, 29 Zizhuyuan Lu, Haidian District

Hotel

Shangri-La Hotel to host world's top tennis stars

For the eighth consecutive year, Shangri-La Hotel, Beijing has been selected as the official hotel of the 2011 China Open Tennis Tournament. The hotel is honored to host the tournament's players during their stay in Beijing.

The China Open, held at the Beijing Tennis Center, China Open will be attended by the world's top seeds from September 30 to October 9. Among this year's players are Novak Djokovic, Maria Sharapova, Li Na and Andy Murray. This year, the hotel is expected to receive 300 guests that will be attending the event.

Shangri-La Hotel, Beijing is also the official caterer for VIPs at the stadium's VIP lounge.

"It is truly an honor to have been chosen as the China Open's official hotel for the seventh consecutive year. It is an invaluable recognition of our entire staff's high-caliber service," said Christopher Chia, general manager of the hotel.

"This is a wonderful opportunity for us to continue to extend the hotel's distinct hospitality to China Open



guests. As always, we aim to deliver personalized service with taste and discretion, and to provide a welcoming environment to the players that is conducive to great performance."

Jingle with Eddie Peng and Angelababy sighted at Crowne Plaza

During National Day holiday, Pamper yourself and family this National Day in the modern and comfortable amenities at Sunworld Dynasty Hotel. The hotel is offering a special holiday rate of 1,008 yuan per night for a superior room or a three-night stay at 948 yuan per night from September 30 to October 6.

Don't forget to try our International Seafood Buffet Extravaganza available each evening at Dynasty Plaza. Enjoy complimentary benefits, including free use of the gymnasium and swimming pool, high-speed broadband Internet access and Sunrider premier herbal toiletries.

Where: Sunworld Dynasty Hotel, 50 Wangfujing Dajie, Dongcheng District
Tel: 5816 8888 ext. 8311



National Day special at Sunworld Dynasty Hotel

The press conference for the release of "Love You You" was held last month at the luxurious Crowne Ballroom in Crowne Plaza Beijing Chaoyang U-Town.

The director, Jingle with Eddie Peng, Angela-

baby, Yuchen Zhu and Yang Zhou attended the event. They were welcomed by Helen Chen, the deputy general manager of Crowne Plaza Beijing Chaoyang U-Town, along with the Acting General Manager Ringo Poon (pictured above).

Dinning

High tea at Crown Plaza's Chao

Sit back and relax at the Lobby Lounge, Chao, located on Floor 1 of the Crowne Plaza Beijing Chaoyang U-Town.

The Lobby Lounge is now presenting two high tea sets. Both include pastries, finger sandwiches and both Chinese and foreign teas.

The Chinese fusion tea set includes traditional Beijing zhajiang noodles and Asian hors d'oeuvres.

Add 38 yuan for a glass of sparkling wine to accompany your stylish high tea.

Where: Floor 1, Crowne Plaza Beijing Chaoyang U-Town, 3 Sanfeng North Area, Chaoyang District (south-east of Ministry of Foreign Affairs)

When: Daily, 3-5 pm

Cost: traditional high tea, 68 yuan per person; Chinese fusion tea set, 88 yuan per person (15 percent gratuity)
Tel: 5909 6688



Airline

Jetstar becomes Ningbo's first low cost int'l carrier

Low-fare leader Jetstar recently flew its first passengers from Ningbo to Singapore, becoming the Chinese city's first-ever international low-cost carrier.

The new flight departs three times per week, and in November will begin departing four times per week. It is the only direct connection between the two cities, saving many travelers up to five hours and enabling them to connect to other destinations in the Jetstar network.

Jetstar Asia's CEO Chong Phit Lian said the route has opened a new era of travel for Ningbo customers, who can now access Singapore at fares that are 40 percent lower than Jetstar's competitors.

"Our low fares will no doubt stimulate traveler markets as we provide opportunities to those who previously could not afford to fly," she said.

"We are seeing strong demand already from both local tour groups and independent travelers from Ningbo, as well as great support from the business community. We welcome this auspicious occasion of celebrating Ningbo as our 8th greater Chinese destination, commencing services in the 8th Lunar month," Chong said.

Chong was joined by Hua Dong, the general manager of Ningbo Lishe Airport, to celebrate the inaugural service.



Shanghai gets taste of British Airways' new first class

British Airways' customers in China can enjoy the airline's new first-class cabin on flights to and from Shanghai.

The new cabin is available on the Boeing 777 aircraft that flies between Shanghai and London Heathrow six times each week. It will soon be made available on British Airways' other long-haul flights.

The airline has invested more than 1 billion yuan in its flagship brand. The new first class cabin draws on its rich heritage to create an exclusive experience based on classic design and understated luxury.

"China is a very important market for us, so we are delighted that our new first-class is readily available to our customers in Shanghai," said Kevin McQuillan, British Airways' regional general manager, East Asia.

"The new first – the result of years of research, design and development – is the latest example of British Airways' pioneering legacy. I believe that the most discerning travelers in China will certainly appreciate the new cabins, which redefine style and elegance," he said.

(By Jackie Zhang)

Fri, Sept. 16

Drama
Life of Galileo

This is director Zhang Nan's adaption of Bertolt Brecht's play *Galileo*. In the play, Brecht is critical of Galileo for not defending truth in the face of doubters.

Where: Multi-functional Theater of the National Center for the Performing Arts, 2 Xi Chang'an Jie, Xicheng District
When: 7:30 pm
Admission: 160-240 yuan
Tel: 6655 0000

Nightlife
Ballad on the Road

Folk musician Dongzi first picked up a guitar in the late-1980s. His songs are about his memories and experiences, which include serving in the military and selling rice.

Where: Jianghu Bar, 7 Dongmianhua Hutong, Jiadaokou Nan Dajie, Dongcheng District
When: 9 pm
Admission: 50 yuan advance purchase, 60 yuan at the door
Tel: 6401 4611



Sat, Sept. 17

**Nightlife**
Trust and Passion

Local punk band Rui Wang Fen released its latest album, *God Save the Poors*, at the end of last year. It includes seven songs written over the past three years.

Where: Mao Livehouse, 111 Gulou Dong Dajie, Dongcheng District
When: 8 pm
Admission: 50 yuan advance purchase, 60 yuan at the door
Tel: 6402 5080

Movie
Self-Portrait With Three Women (2010)

Zhang Mengqi's debut film is a documentary that digs deep into the minds of three women from the same family as they measure their lives against society's expectations.

Where: Dream Factory, Wenjin International Art Center, South Gate of Tsinghua University, 1 Dong Zhongguancun Lu, Haidian District

When: 8 pm
Admission: Free
Email: tsingyingfilm@gmail.com

Nightlife
Miaou

Japanese instrumental post-rock band Miaou was formed in 1999 by Tatsuki Hamasaki and the two sisters Mayumi and Hiromi Hasegawa.

Where: The One Club, Building 5, 718 Art and Culture Zone, 19 Ganluyuan, Gao-beidian Bei Lu, Chaoyang District
When: 8 pm
Admission: 80 yuan advance purchase, 100 yuan at the door
Tel: 51290 082



Sun, Sept. 18



Mon, Sept. 19

Nightlife
Huun Huur Tu

This Tuvan band plays traditional instruments, such as the igil, a two-stringed mini cello; doshpuluur, a boxy two-string grasslands banjo-like instrument; and goat-skin shaman drum, and includes throat singing.

Where: Yugongyishan, 3-2 Zhangzizhong Lu, Dongcheng District
When: 8 pm
Admission: 40 yuan, 30 yuan for students
Tel: 8402 8477

Nightlife
Define Your Funeral

Seven bands – Evilthorn, Wrath of Despot, Raping Corpse to Sacrifice the Moon, Funeral, Curse Rampant, Skeletal Augury and Nagzul – will perform.

Where: 13 Club, 161 Chengfu Lu, Lanqiying, Haidian District
When: 9 pm
Admission: 50 yuan
Tel: 8261 9267



Tue, Sept. 20

Exhibition
The Lost Scenery

The oil paintings in this solo exhibition by Peng Pi are named after easily recognizable female celebrities or characters from movies and literature, such as Angelina, Natasha and Lolita.

Where: Zhong Fang Jiao Gallery, 798 Art District, 4 Jiuxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang District
When: Until October 1, daily except Monday and Tuesday, 10 am – 6 pm
Admission: Free
Tel: 5978 9345



Wed, Sept. 21

Exhibition
Surplus Goodlookingness

"Good looking" is a common phrase used widely by the Chinese with different shades of meaning. For instance, a "good looking" film is one that never has a dull moment. In this group exhibition, the artists rethink the relationship between the concept of "good looking" and the commercial art world.

Where: Tang Contemporary Art Beijing, 798 Art District, 2 Jiuxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang District
When: Until September 30, daily except Monday and Tuesday, 10 am – 6 pm
Admission: Free
Tel: 5978 9610

Thu, Sept. 22

Movie
I'm a Cyborg But That's OK (2006)

This South Korean comedy is a romance between two patients in a mental institution. Believing herself a cyborg, Young-goon charges herself with a transistor radio. Il-soon, a fellow inmate, steals the other inmates' personality traits, believing he is fading and will one day turn into a dot.

Where: China Film Archive, 3 Wenhuiyuan Lu, Xiaoxitian, Haidian District
When: 7 pm
Admission: 20 yuan
Tel: 8229 6153

(By He Jianwei)

